

840-RICR-00-00-1

TITLE 840 - RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

CHAPTER 00 - N/A

SUBCHAPTER 00 - N/A

PART 1 - Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities

1.1 Purpose

RIPTA's Reduced Fare Bus Pass Program (the "Program") enables seniors (aged 65 or over) and individuals with qualifying disabilities (collectively "Eligible Individuals") to ride the RIPTA system at reduced fare rates, as such rates are set by RIPTA in accordance with its authority to set fares under R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-18-4. To qualify for reduced fares, individuals must obtain a Reduced Fare Bus Pass as provided in this Program, which supersedes all prior programs, policies and procedures regarding reduced fares.

1.2 Program Eligibility

A. Individuals may qualify for the Program as follows:

1. Proof of Identification. To qualify, an applicant must provide one of the following as proof of identification:
 - a. Driver's license
 - b. U.S. Passport
 - c. State Identification Card
 - d. Veterans Administration ID Card
2. Qualifying as a Senior. To qualify as a senior, individuals must show proof of age by providing any one of the following:
 - a. Driver's License
 - b. Passport
 - c. Medicare Card
 - d. Green Card/Citizenship Papers

3. Qualifying as a Person with a Disability. To qualify as a person with a disability, individuals must provide one of the following:
 - a. A current SSI/SSDI Award Letter
 - b. Department of Veterans Affairs Letter (with disability rating at or above 40%)
 - c. In the event that an applicant does not have any of the foregoing documentation, the applicant may present a letter from a treating physician with a medical diagnosis that would qualify the applicant as disabled for purpose of receiving SSI/SSDI benefits, with such diagnosis subject to verification by RIPTA. The letter must be signed by the physician and must include his/her medical license number. In the event that an applicant is unable to present such medical documentation, RIPTA will consider other documentation and factors on a case-by-case basis.
 - d. A Certification of Disability issued by the Rhode Island Office of Rehabilitative Services (“ORS”) showing that they have a disability that would qualify them for SSDI or SSI benefits.

B. An individual who establishes eligibility as a senior or a person with a qualifying disability will be entitled to either an “All Day Pass” or a “Limited Day Pass.” All Day Passes will permit Eligible Individuals to ride a RIPTA bus at any time for a reduced fare. However, no fare reduction will apply on special service routes or over-crowded routes, as determined by RIPTA. Limited Day Passes will permit Eligible Individuals to ride a RIPTA bus for a reduced fare during non-peak ridership hours. Non-peak hours are as follows:

1. Weekdays: Before 7:00 a.m.; between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 pm.; and after 6:00 p.m.
2. Weekends & holidays: All day.

1.3 Requirements of Income Eligibility

A. Whether an Eligible Individual is able to obtain an All Day or Limited Day Pass will depend on that individual’s income. All Day Passes will be available to Eligible Individuals whose income falls below the income means-test established by the Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services (“EOHHS”). The means test threshold is currently set at 200% of the federal poverty level. Limited Day Passes will be available to Eligible Individuals whose income falls above the means test threshold.

1. Note that this threshold is subject to change. In addition, RIPTA reserves the right to waive the income requirements for special programs, or to enter into contracts that may provide bus passes that may deviate from

this policy. No contracts or waivers shall affect the provisions regarding use of bus passes.

B. To qualify for an All Day Pass, an Eligible Individual must provide one of the following:

1. IRS Tax Account Transcript (most recent year)
2. SSI Award Letter
3. Medicaid Eligibility Letter (most recent year)
4. RI DHS Supplemental Income Verification Notice

1.4 Reduced Fare for Attendants

Individuals who accompany and assist Eligible Individuals who are blind or who use a wheelchair will qualify for a reduced fare. Passes issued to blind individuals or individuals who use a wheelchair will indicate that an attendant who accompanies and assists those individuals will be entitled to a reduced fare.

1.5 Applying for a Reduced Fare Bus Pass

A. There are three ways to obtain applications for Reduced Fare Bus Passes:

1. Web Download: From the RIPTA website – www.ripta.com.
2. Request by Phone: Call RIPTA Customer Service at 401-781-9400.
3. In Person: At RIPTA ID Office, 1 Kennedy Plaza, Providence RI 02903 (Monday-Thursday, 9 AM to 4 PM); or RIPTA Information Desk, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence RI 02907 (Monday-Friday, 9 AM to 4 PM)

B. Applications may be hand-delivered to the RIPTA offices above or mailed to the Elmwood Avenue office.

1.6 Application Processing

RIPTA staff will confirm the information provided in the application(s) and notify applicants within 21 business days of their status. Applicants approved to receive Reduced Fare Bus Passes will be scheduled for an appointment to have their photograph taken and receive their pass. If an applicant has an existing reduced fare bus pass that was issued after January 1, 2013, there shall be no charge for a new pass. If an applicant has an existing pass that was issued before January 1, 2013, there will be a \$10.00 administrative charge for the pass, which shall be payable by cash, money order, or by other means as established by RIPTA in the future. Individuals must present valid photo identification (e.g., a driver's license, passport or other acceptable government-issued identification) to obtain a pass.

1.7 Pass Renewals

Passes will be valid for two years. After a pass expires, the holder of the pass must reapply in accordance with the provisions of this Program. However, RIPTA reserves the right to decrease or increase the duration of time for which a pass shall be valid.

1.8 Replacement Passes

Replacement of lost or stolen passes must be requested in person. A damaged bus pass must be returned to RIPTA in order to obtain a replacement. A fee of \$20 will be charged for all replacement passes.

1.9 Applicable Fares

Passes issued under this Program are only valid for the purpose of qualifying for a reduced fare. The fare paid by a pass-holder is subject to change based on any fare change instituted by RIPTA. Passes do not entitle the pass-holder to transportation on the RIPTA system.

1.10 Use of RIPTA Bus Passes

All passes issued under this Program must be kept in the possession of the qualifying person at all times while riding RIPTA services. RIPTA bus passes are electronic and must register on the farebox to be accepted. Drivers have the right to verify the photo ID of the user.

1.11 Improper Use of RIPTA Bus Passes

- A. RIPTA reserves the right to confiscate or revoke any bus pass that has been used improperly. Improper use includes:
 - 1. Using an expired pass;
 - 2. Using someone else's pass;
 - 3. Defacing a pass;
 - 4. Sharing or selling a pass; or
 - 5. Improperly or fraudulently obtaining a pass.

- B. An individual who improperly uses his/her bus pass may be suspended from the Program for a period of one year, after which the individual may reapply. Any further improper use shall result in a permanent revocation of the individual's pass and expulsion from the Program.

1.12 Appeals

- A. A person may choose to file an appeal if his/her application is denied or his/her pass is confiscated or revoked. Additional information or any extenuating circumstances can be provided as part of the appeal. An appeal must be filed in writing within 20 business days to:
 - 1. RIPTA Customer Service Manager, Bus Pass Program, 705 Elmwood Avenue, Providence RI 02907
- B. The Customer Service Manager will review all relevant materials, investigate the matter, consult with other parties as necessary, and render a decision within 21 business days of receiving the appeal

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